



"Business and Human Rights" and Responsible Business Conduct

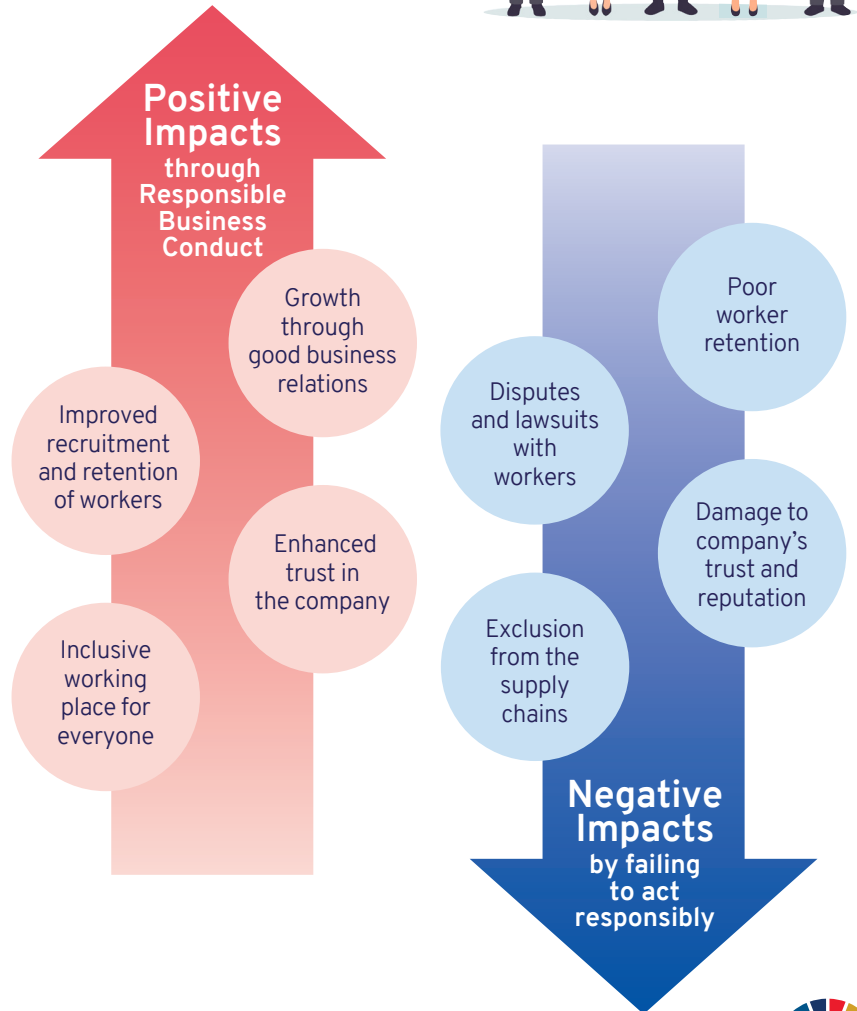
Why is "Business and Human Rights" particularly important today?

The link between business and human rights has been widely acknowledged in recent years, leading to calls for stronger measures by governments and businesses to protect and respect human rights in the context of business operations. An increasing number of enterprises are taking this trend as an opportunity to align their practices with human rights norms.

The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) are grounded in recognition of States' existing obligations to protect human rights, the responsibility of business enterprises to respect human rights and the need for both to ensure access to remedy.

On the one hand, **responsible business conduct (RBC) enables enterprises to operate more sustainably** and can bring benefits such as improved employee satisfaction and retention, higher productivity, and enhanced reputation and business opportunities to the enterprises. On the other hand, failing to act responsibly could result in negative impacts not only on workers, but also on business and customer relations, including loss of business, reputational damage or even liability.

Workers and their representatives are important stakeholders in the business and human rights norms: enterprises' efforts to respect workers' rights and promote social dialogues at workplaces and in the supply chains will strengthen the companies' operations and their competitiveness.



What companies are expected to do based on the UN Guiding Principles?

- Share a policy commitment to meet its responsibility to respect human rights
- Carry out **human rights due diligence** to identify, prevent, mitigate and account for how they address their impacts on human rights
- **Provide for or cooperate in remediation** when adverse human rights impacts are identified



3 pillars of The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights

What does it mean by workers' rights in business?

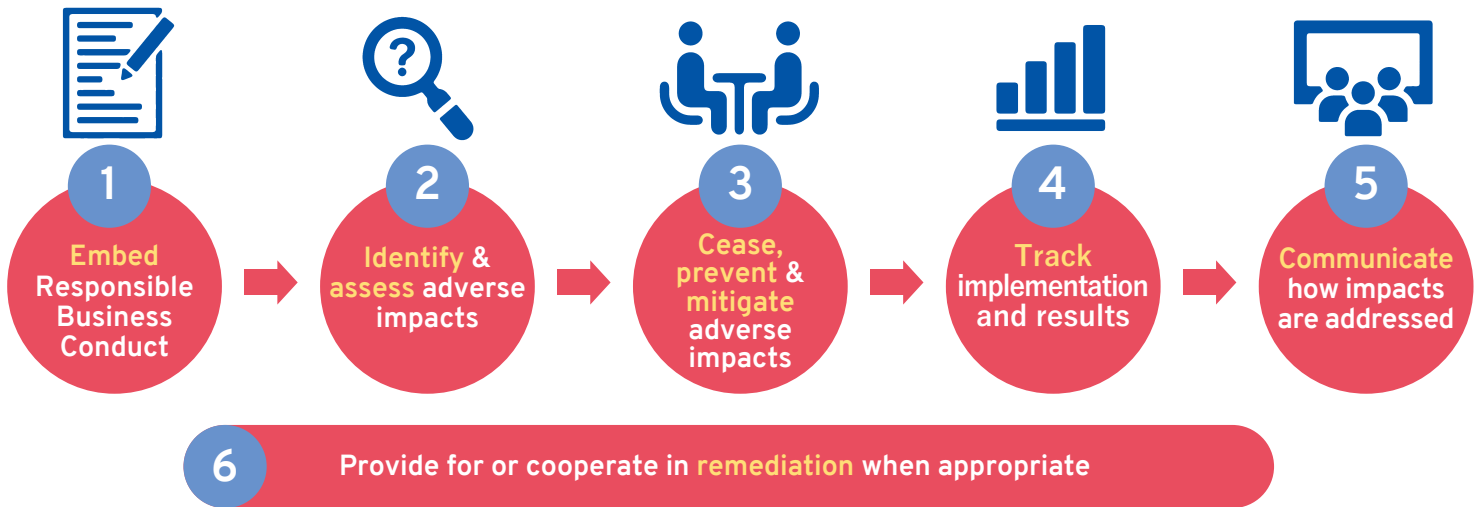
The five areas below are established in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work



- 1 Freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining
- 2 The elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour
- 3 The effective abolition of child labour
- 4 The elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation
- 5 A safe and healthy working environment

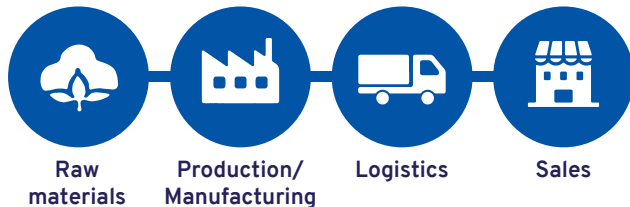
How to conduct Human Rights Due Diligence?

It is a process to assess, identify, prevent, mitigate and account for how they address adverse human rights impacts in their operations and supply chains and to act upon potential and actual negative impacts on human rights.



Stakeholder Engagement: Regularly interact and hold meaningful consultations with individuals or groups (including workers' organizations) potentially affected by the company's operations, products or services

This applies to companies throughout the supply chains!



Checklist based on ILO Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work

Do your business partners also follow the principles?

- Does the company prohibit child labour and forced labour?
 - Is the freedom of association, the rights to organize and bargain collectively respected?
 - Is the company guided by the principle of non-discrimination in employment and wages?
 - Is the company creating a safe and healthy working environment?
- etc...

Initiatives that all companies can start tomorrow

- **Understand the current trends in business and human rights** by actively participating in events and programmes held by governments, international organizations, and industry associations.
- **Map out company's business operations and supply chains** to know where the material and component suppliers are located and where finished products and services are used.
- Map out who are rights holders and how their rights might be affected through your business operations including in value chains (**Stakeholder mapping**)
- Start **exchanging opinions** on business and human rights and ILO Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work **with unions and workers' representatives**.
- Analyze any disputes, lawsuits or non-compliances that have caused **problems in the past**.
- Actively **publicize your company's efforts** and initiatives internally and externally.

References

United Nations

- Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights



ILO

- ILO MNE Declaration
- Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work



OECD

- Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct



Government of Japan

- National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights (2020-2025)
- Guidelines on Respect for Human Rights in Responsible Supply Chains

